

BETHESDA BUGLE

Blow up the trumpet in the new moon!



Bethesda United Methodist Church • P.O. Box 147 • Preston, MD • 410-673-7538 • Volume 1, Issue 5 • July 2010

Pastor's Farewell Message

What a friend we have in Jesus! How many times we have sung the words of that beautiful hymn and felt the assurance that Jesus is our great friend who loves us and cares for us. Rod and I are assured in all of Scripture that Jesus loves us; and as we say our goodbyes in leaving the church where we have shared so much in ministry together, we are deeply thankful for the many dear friends that love us here in the Body of Christ at Bethesda. We appreciate that our family was welcomed as well and for the love and kindnesses we have been extended over the past six years.

We have experienced so much together – in worship, in sharing our joys and sorrows, in studying God's Word, and in learning and growing spiritually. We have shared and shouldered ministry together. We have celebrated at an open altar, serving and receiving Communion and welcoming those who

ask for God's grace and mercy as we prayed for their needs. In all things, earthly and spiritual, it is not about us but about God; and through our worship, we have drawn closer to God and each other.

Together, we have passed from one season to another in our life in the church. Scripture tells us that in every season, there is a time to work; and we have worked as a team to do God's ministry. We have worked diligently on our faith journey to accomplish all we could. We have lived for God and have experienced much in our love and ministry together. We have planted and harvested for God's Kingdom, knowing that each investment of time was to bring our church to a better place for God and to bring Him the glory. We have fine-tuned some established ministry, and we have embarked on some new ministry.

As we complete this last part of our season together, please know that Rod and I hold you in our hearts and prayers. We pray for God's blessings upon us all as we go on to our next spiritual season. Above all else, may our goal be Jesus, and more of Jesus. May our love be the expression of His full love. May our thoughts and actions be centered in and on Jesus. May we live to bless Him as we do well in carrying the name of "Christian," honoring Him and being a full reflection of His great love. At all times and to all people, may we reach out in His name and live in ways that let others know we truly belong to Him. May the next season be one of joy and prosperity for all of us, and may God's full peace rest upon us always.

Rev. Joan C. Wolff

From the History Commission

The History Commission would like to extend its thanks to Rev. Wolff for her extensive involvement and encouragement since we began meeting regularly a few months ago. Our meetings have been fun (often hilarious) and productive, and Rev. Wolff has been instrumental in the preparations for the anniversary in October. The *Bugle* even owes her its name. In these moments, the temptation is to play "Taps" – but we're going to look to the future and play "Reveille" instead.

Few things are more essentially Methodist than itinerancy, so it is perhaps fitting in our Anniversary year that we find ourselves saying goodbye to one minister, and welcoming another into our congregation. Itinerancy was the invention of John Wesley, who argued, "We have found by long and consistent experience that a frequent exchange of preachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another, no one whom I ever yet knew has

all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation."¹ The system, with circuit riders serving multiple congregations, was well-suited to post-Revolutionary America, where communities were often very spread out.

On Delmarva, the birthplace of American Methodism, circuit distances could reach into the hundreds of miles, and would take several weeks to cover from beginning to end. Francis Asbury was largely responsible for ensuring the itinerancy system persisted in America, and that persistence paid off in places like the Eastern Shore. "Riding his horse over fields, through forests, around marshes, and across rivers," writes one authority, "the circuit rider made himself available to most of the rural folk of Delmarva. Where his horse wouldn't carry him, a waterman's log canoe would." It should come as no surprise that by 1784 most of Delmarva's Methodist meetinghouses remained out in

the countryside.² Frazier's Chapel was one of those churches. For Bethesda, itinerancy is not only a longstanding tradition, it is a badge of honor.

Eric Cheezum

1 - Quoted at <http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=16&mid=4810> (accessed July 2010).

2 - William H. Williams, *The Garden of Methodism: The Delmarva Peninsula, 1769-1820* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1984), 91.

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Following the Call

It is quite an honor and a privilege to be called into the ministry from my home church, Bethesda UMC. I was called into the ministry in June of 2004 at the Annual Conference's Ordination ceremony at the University of Maryland-Easter Shore. It was an undeniable call by God and I answered by going forward to accept the invitation by Bishop Weaver, and to publically accept the call by God. It was first announced at Bethesda the following Sunday by then-Pastor Mark Farnell. I told God that He had a sense of humor: I had gone through brain surgery due to a brain aneurysm, and could not remember my own name some days, yet part of the path ahead included attending college! Needless to say, He healed my brain and restored my memory.

The next step was to meet with the District Committee of Ordained Ministry (DCOM) to announce my call, to ask for approval, and proceed to the next part of my journey, which was to study with a Candidacy mentor for two years. I also had to be approved by our annual Charge Conference, which is a yearly process, as well as meeting with DCOM every year to be approved to continue on my track to become an ordained Deacon in the Methodist church. I have now graduated Chesapeake College with an Associate's

degree in Applied Science, and plan to attend Salisbury University's bachelor program in Social Work. Afterward I will attend Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. for two years. I then will be on probation for three years and afterward will be ordained if approved.

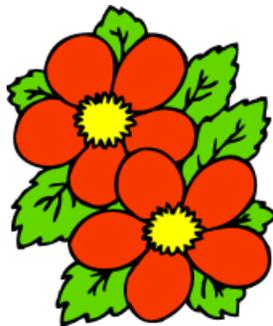
It is a lot to go through, especially since I will soon be 54 years old with a long road still ahead, but it is so very much worth it. I have found that when you are obedient to God He always takes care of the details and prepares the way for you to succeed in your journey. I was once told that "when God makes the call he pays the bill", and that is so true in so many ways. I have received so much financial support that I absolutely know that it was God. I have received scholarships that I did not apply for, and received many financial gifts that I did not expect, that have helped pay my tuition along the way. God is awesome and awe inspiring. I will continue to follow His leading, and that of the Holy Spirit, to get me where He wants me to be.

Debbie Weems

[Ed. note: As far as can be ascertained, Debbie is among a very select group who have entered the ministry from Bethesda, and our only congregant to follow the call since 1900.]



For everything there
is a season, and a
time for every matter
under heaven.
~ Ecclesiastes 3:1 ~



News Briefs

- There will be an Activities Committee meeting **Thursday, July 22, at 7:00 pm.**
- Bethesda will host a covered dish luncheon after service on **July 25**, in honor of the Wolffs. Please join us, and bring along your favorite dish. For further information, contact Judy Noel at 410-673-8034.
- The Women of Bethesda are once again collecting school supplies for Preston School. Please bring your contributions to Barbara Baker.
- Choir practice will resume **Wednesday, September 1 at 7:00 p.m.**
- July's "Dinner at Six" has been cancelled in order to focus on next Sunday's luncheon; an August event is under discussion and will be confirmed shortly. In the meantime, be sure to put **Sept. 23** on your calendars, as we will be hosting a very special history program after dinner that evening!
- **Sunday, October 17, 10:30 am-noon:** Bethesda's 225th Anniversary Celebration. Covered Dish dinner will follow.
- **Saturday, October 23:** CRHS Homecoming Parade. Let's get a committee together to build a float!
- **Saturday, Nov. 20 @ 9am:** Christmas Bazaar - handcrafts, baked goods, floral arrangements, jams, jellies. Think of Bethesda as you do Summer Canning!

My Bethesda Memories

My earliest memory of Bethesda was singing at a hymn sing or some type of musical program there with my mother when I was six. We did not attend Bethesda at that time, but had been asked to come and sing. At that time, the piano was [located in what is now the choir loft]. My next memories are of attending there beginning at the age of eight until I went to college. I have many memories from growing up, but one in particular is the look of the organ area. Because my mother was the organist [at the time], I had the opportunity to go into the organ area often. The floor of the organ loft, at that time, was built up only enough to account for the organ and the organ bench. I always remember thinking that if my mom had pushed the organ bench back too far, she would plummet to the ground because it was probably a two foot drop. Years later when I came back to substitute for Dora [Mitchell] a couple times, it was strange to walk into that area and have a complete and even floor.

Kari Farnell

Carl, my mother, Tharon, and I were looking for a local church to join. We had moved to Hurlock, but friends, doctors, etc., caused us to frequently drive by Bethesda UMC. The sign out front caught my eye one time - I don't remember remember the specific one - but after that, I would always look to see what the sign said. We thought, "A church with a sense of humor - that sounds interesting!" We were going to visit several churches in the area and then decide what church to join, but everyone at Bethesda was so welcoming (especially Wanda and Doug Prothero) that we never visited another church.

Nancy Bayne

Bethesda History Notes

As 1874 came to a close, Bethesda seems to have settled into a holding pattern: preparations for renovating the old chapel were under way, and subscriptions were slowly bringing in funds from the congregation, but the every day business of maintaining the

church went on. The minutes reprinted here demonstrate the diverse problems Bethesda's trustees faced, from the selection of a contractor for building renovations, to the mundane responsibility of repairing the stoves and chimneys in the existing structure. Of

particular note is the rental of the parsonage from Isaac Noble. It would seem that in its haste to underwrite the remodeling of the church, Bethesda allowed itself to fall into arrears in other, longer term, debts.

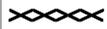
Preston – May 23^d 1874

Trustees Meet[ing] – Members Present: D.R. Wright, H.F. Willis, T.S. Noble, J.W. Harris, J.W. Bradl[e]y.¹

Rev. O'Neil[] opened the meeting with prayer,² after which J.W. Bradl[e]y was elected as sec[re]t[ar]y. Proceedings of the last meeting read and adopted. The following was the result of the meeting, viz.: after a short Discussion, Dr. H.F. Willis was Elected Treasurer.³ A motion was then made and adopted, that there be a committee of three elected from the Board of Trustees, to procure a contractor for the work⁴ at once. The meeting then adjourned until the 24th inst[ant] at 10 am.

J.W. Bradley

May 24th, '74⁵



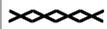
Nov. 25[, 1874],⁶ Trustees, . . . met at Bethesda for the purpose of taking⁷ some action, with regard to Stoves and Pipe. Members present – Messers – Harris, Dr. Willis, T.S. Noble, Wm. Billips, Jos. Noble, J.W. Bradl[e]y.

The meeting was called to order, & Dr. Willis Elected Chairman for the evening, & J.W. Bradl[e]y Sec[re]t[ar]y. After some Discussion the the [sic] following plan was adopted: that a committee consisting of T.S. Noble & J.W. Bradl[e]y should Purchase 12 feet of stovepipe and 2 new Elbows, also [sic] 2 Bonnets to be placed on the top of the chimneys for the purpose of Preventing the wind from Blowing down the chimneys. Mr L.C. Jones⁸ & J.W. Bradl[e]y was [sic] then appointed to put up the pipe and fix the Bonnets in their proper places; also [sic], to cement around the chimneys.

The Deficiency due Mr. Is[aac] L. Noble⁹ on Parsonage rent then came up¹⁰ and as all the mony [sic] had not all ben [sic] Raised, Mr. Noble refused to settle, untill [sic] all was raised.¹¹ Dr. Willis appointed treas.¹² for the purpose of receiving the am[oun]t due to Mr. Noble, and pay over the same, when enough has been rec[eive]d by him to cover¹³ the claim which is: Amt Due to date 25.57.

On motion the meeting adjourned to meet on Monday evening, 6 o'clock.¹⁴

J.W. Bradl[e]y, Scty



Preston Nov. 30th, 1874¹⁵

Trustees met. Members present: Dr. Willis, Elijah Todd, Joseph Noble, Willis Wright, JW Bradl[e]y.¹⁶

(Union Temperance Society Ledger, Barratt's Chapel [Frederica, DE] P#DSC06069, P#DSC06070 & P#DSC06071)

1 - All but Harris are profiled in the minutes published in issue 2 of the *Bugle*. James Willet Harris (b. 1841) is one of a very long line of Harrises who have attended Bethesda. He lived on the farm currently occupied by his great-grandson, Gene Harris. Gene says his father remembered "Willet" as a faithful churchgoer and a "good person." He led classes at the church and was a trustee at least as early as January 1869. He served also as a steward of Bethlehem Methodist church when it was part of the Bethesda circuit. Harris' sister, Melissa (b. 1835), married Elijah Todd, another Bethesda trustee (*PH* 85).

2 - It is unclear why O'Neill was not included as a member of the trustees, as he had been in previous minutes. He appears in only one more set of minutes, so perhaps he left the

board, or was removed. O'Neill's time seems to have been divided between Preston and Federalsburg at this time, so perhaps he left the board to devote more time to his work. As he left Bethesda at the end of 1875, it is possible he was involved in some kind of political struggle and was forced out.

3 - At this point, Bradley seems to have thought better of his notes. Several false starts are crossed out, until the minutes continue as transcribed.

4 - Presumably the plans described in the minutes from May 4, 1874, which were published in the *Bugle* last month. In those minutes reference was made to a meeting planned for May 16. These are missing so it is possible that "the work" refers to something

that came up in that meeting, or, indeed, in another one with minutes that are lost.

5 - This date appears on the line below Bradley's name. It is unclear to what it refers. Possibly Bradley wrote up the minutes after the fact and was dating them. Equally possibly, he may have begun a section for the minutes of the following day's meeting, but never actually wrote anything down.

6 - I have assumed this year based on context; it is not noted in the minutes.

7 - Spelled "takking" in the original.

8 - This transcription seems correct, but I have found no record of an L.C. Jones in any of the usual sources.

Church Calendar

August 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 Peach Festival, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
15 Church Picnic (tentative)	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 First Day of School	26 Dinner at Six (tentative)	27	28
29	30	31				

History Notes (contd.)

9 - Isaac L. Noble (1829-1901) owned considerable property in Preston, and built many of the houses in the town, including the grey one directly across Main Street from Bethesda's bell tower. Noble is buried in Bethesda cemetery (*PH* 154).

10 - The following words are crossed out at this juncture: "and was arranged as follows - The committee reported having rec[ei]ve[d]."

11 - It is unclear where the Bethesda parsonage was located at this time. Dora Mitchell speculates that the church might have employed the house on the west corner of Lednum and Main, which was later the parsonage for Mt. Pleasant and Mt. Calvary, for this purpose, but there is no record of Noble owning or managing that property (*PH* 147). In 1891, however, Noble deeded a parcel to the trustees for the first known parsonage, on what is now Maple Avenue. Dora suggests that a house already stood on that property before 1891, although the date in the house's foundation is 1890. Perhaps another structure predated that one, and the trustees rented it from Noble (*PH* 164).

12 - "Appointed treas." seems correct here, but both words are difficult to decipher.

13 - "Relieve" was the original word choice here. It is struck out in the original.

14 - A few squiggles are present around "6 o'clock"; their significance is unclear.

15 - These appear to be the only minutes from this meeting that remain. It is unknown if more ever existed, or if the secretary (presumably Bradley) simply did not record any further information.

16 - All but Willis Wright have been profiled to a greater or lesser extent in earlier issues of the *Bugle*. Wright was the brother of Daniel R. Wright, who was also a Bethesda trustee. He married Margaret Patchett around 1834 and they had four children. The Wrights lived at Grove, before moving to the farm at the corner of Poplar Neck and Havercamp Roads, and then to the Lloyd Price house in Chop-tank. Wright built Friendship Church in 1857 (it burnt down in the 1990s), and is reputed to have built the Price house as well (*PH* 85, 211).

Weekly Income

The following figures cover the four weeks since the last issue of the *Bugle*. Our average weekly income is \$853; *per capita* weekly contributions stand at approximately **\$17.40**. Based on our average weekly requirement of **\$1,200**, our current overall deficit is **\$10,056**.

Service Date	Attendance	Tithes and Offering
June 27	62	\$1,361.02
July 4	40	\$857.00
July 11	?	\$649.50
July 18	?	\$906.00

Acolyte Schedule

August 1-Alyson Farnell
 August 8-Alyson Farnell
 August 15-Alyson Farnell
 August 22-Johnsons
 August 29-Johnsons
 September 5-Buckleys
 September 12-Buckleys

